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THE ORDER
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DIRECT EDITION
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In the aftermath of the civil war that pitted hero against hero, Iron Man, a.k.a. Tony Stark, envisioned a new world order -- one of responsibility and supervision, where super heroes are federally registered and held accountable to the people they protect. As the new director of the peacekeeping agency S.H.I.E.L.D., Stark personally took charge, creating the 50-State Initiative: A program placing highly trained super hero teams in each state of the nation. The Order is the first such team. Based in California, it is the crown jewel of the Initiative.

Outstanding Americans carefully recruited from a corps of volunteers, the members of the Order have one thing in common: They were all heroes in the "real" world, in ways both great and small. Rigorously trained in their astonishing new powers, the team is backed by the finest public relations and marketing that money can buy.

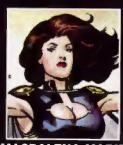
WELCOME TO

THE ORDER

TONY STARK
IRON MAN

PEPPER POTTS
HERA

HENRY HELLRUNG
ANTHEM



MAGDALENA MARIE
VEDA

DENNIS MURRAY
HEAVY

MULHOLLAND BLACK
MULHOLLAND

JAMES WA
CALAMITY

BECKY RYAN
ARALUNE

MILO FIELDS
SUPERNAUT

After saving the San Gabriel mountains from the volatile Infernal Man, most of the team's starting lineup was dismissed for drinking and partying in violation of their contract's morality and ethics clauses. One of their number, Avona, was found dead on the Los Angeles Metro. Pepper Potts, the Order's homebase leader, asked Mulholland Black to use her sometimes unreliable super-power -- a telepathic link to the collective unconscious around her -- to discover what caused the suspicious death. Her investigation uncovered foul play, and implicated Avona's original Order teammates in the murder. Now Calamity and Veda are dispatched to investigate.

Meanwhile, the team's internal troubles are boiling over. After fending off numerous attacks within city limits and at their own doorstep, the Order's been evicted from their downtown L.A. headquarters. Becky Ryan, the team's shapeshifter and former teen beauty pageant winner and pop star, made a sex tape which is about to hit the media maelstrom. And a mysterious government operative named General Softly, a.k.a. the M.A.N. from S.H.A.D.O.W., is keeping tabs on the team… and looking for ways to kill them…

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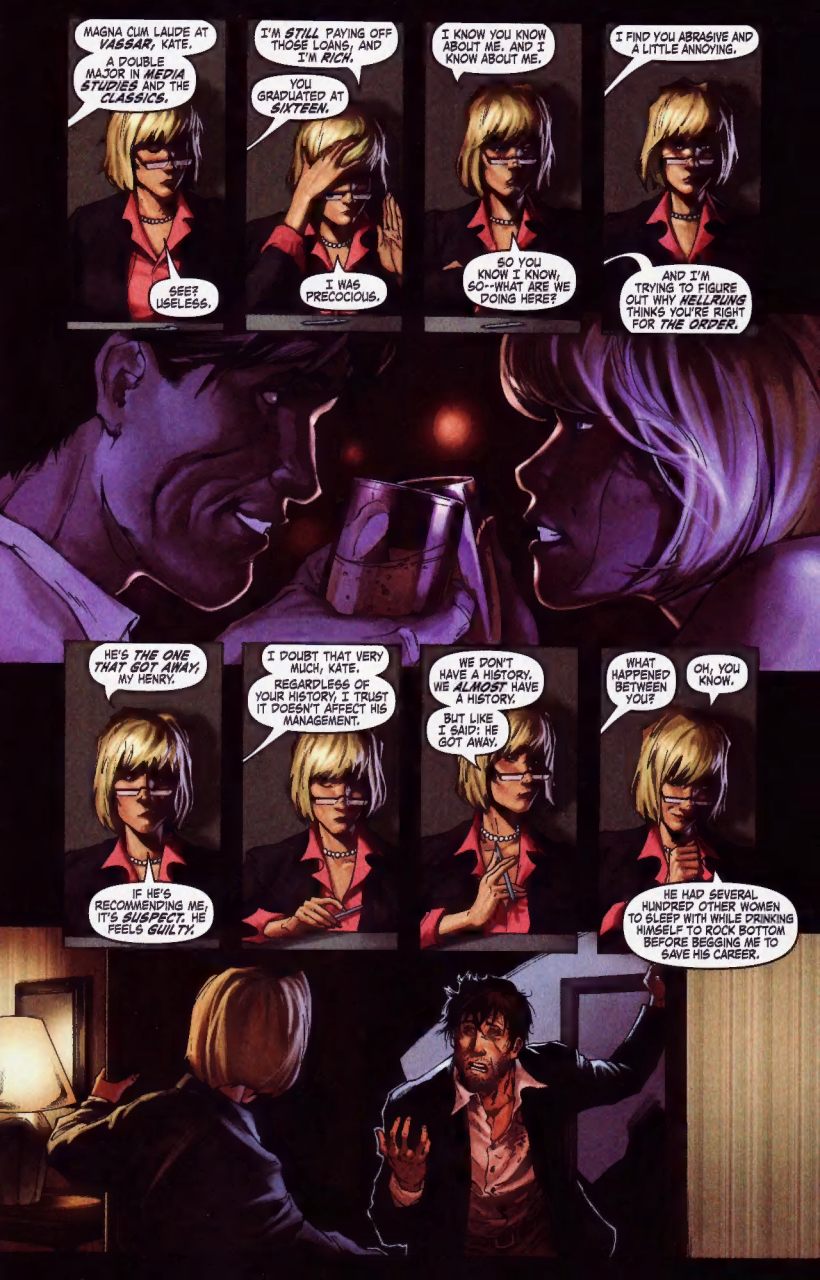
KATE KILDARE. THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS OLD. VIRGO.
HI. YOU ROLLING? HI.
IT'S--AHH, IT'S DIGITAL. THERE'S NO REAL ROLLING ANYM--
BUT YOU UNDERSTAND THE IDIOM.
OF COURSE I--
I KNOW YOU KNOW. I'M JUST PLAYING AROUND A LITTLE.
NINE BROTHERS, AND ME.
THE ONLY WAY I KNOW HOW TO GET BOYS TO LIKE ME IS BY PUNCHING THEM.
DOES THAT SEEM LIKE APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR FOR A JOB INTERVIEW?
MAYBE NOT, BUT LOTS OF BOYS LIKE ME.
MOM DIED IN CHILDBIRTH. DAD NEVER REMARRIED. TOUGH ON A KID.
WE PLAY THE HAND WE'RE DEALT.
TELL ME ABOUT YOUR EDUCATION.
PRETTY BORING. COLLEGE, USELESS DEGREES, STILL PAYING OFF LOANS.


MAGNA CUM LAUDE AT VASSAR, KATE.
A DOUBLE MAJOR IN MEDIA STUDIES AND THE CLASSICS.
SEE? USELESS.
I'M STILL PAYING OFF THOSE LOANS, AND I'M RICH.
YOU GRADUATED AT SIXTEEN.
I WAS PRECOCIOUS.
I KNOW YOU KNOW ABOUT ME. AND I KNOW ABOUT ME.
SO YOU KNOW I KNOW, SO--WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE?
I FIND YOU ABRASIVE AND A LITTLE ANNOYING.
AND I'M TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHY HELLRUNS THINKS YOU'RE RIGHT FOR THE ORDER.
HE'S THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY, MY HENRY.
IF HE'S RECOMMENDING ME, IT'S SUSPECT. HE FEELS GUILTY.
I DOUBT THAT VERY MUCH, KATE.
REGARDLESS OF YOUR HISTORY, I TRUST IT DOESN'T AFFECT HIS MANAGEMENT.
WE DON'T HAVE A HISTORY. WE ALMOST HAVE A HISTORY.
BUT LIKE I SAID: HE GOT AWAY.
WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN YOU?
OH, YOU KNOW.
HE HAD SEVERAL HUNDRED OTHER WOMEN TO SLEEP WITH WHILE DRINKING HIMSELF TO ROCK BOTTOM BEFORE BEGGING ME TO SAVE HIS CAREER.

THE ORDER

5: KATE --OR-- GETTING THINGS DONE

WRITTEN BY **MATT FRACTION**
PENCILS BY **KHARI EVANS**
LAYOUTS BY **BARRY KITSON**
INKS BY **VICTOR OLAZABA**
COLORS BY **JELENA KEVIC DJURDJEVIC with SOTO** (17,18,21) LETTERS BY **ARTMONKEYS STUDIOS**
ALEJANDRO ARBONA ASSISTANT EDITOR **WARREN SIMONS** EDITOR **JOE QUESADA** EDITOR IN CHIEF **DAN BUCKLEY** PUBLISHER

HEY.
YOU DON'T HAPPEN TO HAVE SOME DIRTBAG EX-BOYFRIEND OUT THERE SOMEWHERE THAT MIGHT HAVE CAM-PHONE FOOTAGE OF YOU TWO RUTTING?
AND HE WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO BE THE KIND OF DIRTBAG EX-BOYFRIEND THAT WOULD TRY TO SELL THAT FOOTAGE, WOULD HE?

"Everybody gets so much information all day long that they lose their common sense."
--Gertrude Stein

"The best ammunition against lies is the truth; there is no ammunition against gossip. It is like a fog and the clear wind blows it away and the sun burns it off."
--Ernest Hemingway

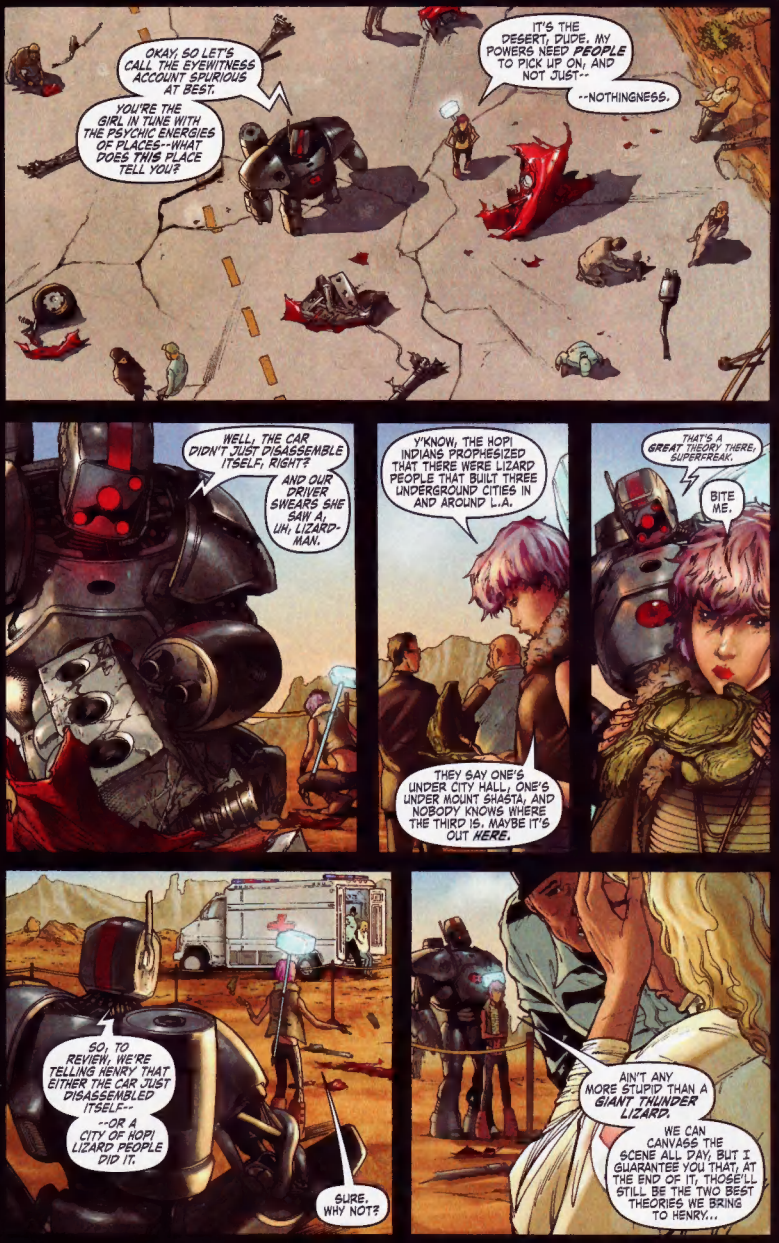
YOU'RE A MEMBER OF THE ORDER, BECKY. THAT MEANS YOU'RE MY CLIENT. AND YOU CAN ASK HENRY-- I ALWAYS TAKE CARE OF MY CLIENTS.
BUT I'M GOING TO REQUEST THAT HENRY BENCH YOU UNTIL I CAN FIX THIS.

"Lying increases the creative faculties, expands the ego, and lessens the frictions of social contacts." --Clare Booth Luce

SOMEWHERE AROUND BARSTOW:
BARSTOW 25
NEEDLES 30
DAGGETT 120
BARSTOW 25
NEEDLES 30
DAGGETT 120
BARSTOW 25
NEEDLES 30
DAGGETT 120

BWOOARRR
AND SO I SAID, "BARRY, LOOK, I ONLY STAR IN DISASTER PICTURES AND--"
OH MY GOD--!!!
SKKKKRRRREEEEEEEEEEEEE
BWOOARRR!!

BWOOARRRR!!
LATER...
GOOD LORD.
HOLY CRAP, SUPERNAUT--FOR A CAR CRASH, THIS IS LIKE--
--MICHAEL BAY-IAN.
SI
AND WHAT ARE THEY SAYING CAUSED ALL THIS?
I'VE READ THE PRELIMINARY POLICE REPORT JUST LIKE YOU, MULHOLLAND, AND IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE. LET'S GET IT STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE.
A GIANT LIZARD MONSTER.
TWENTY FEET TALL, SUPER MAD.


OKAY, SO LET'S CALL THE EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT SPURIOUS AT BEST.
YOU'RE THE GIRL IN TUNE WITH THE PSYCHIC ENERGIES OF PLACES--WHAT DOES THIS PLACE TELL YOU?
IT'S THE DESERT, DUDE. MY POWERS NEED PEOPLE TO PICK UP ON, AND NOT JUST--
--NOTHINGNESS.
WELL, THE CAR DIDN'T JUST DISASSEMBLE ITSELF, RIGHT?
AND OUR DRIVER SWEARS SHE SAW A, UH, LIZARD-MAN.
Y'KNOW, THE HOPI INDIANS PROPHESIZED THAT THERE WERE LIZARD PEOPLE THAT BUILT THREE UNDERGROUND CITIES IN AND AROUND L.A.
THEY SAY ONE'S UNDER CITY HALL, ONE'S UNDER MOUNT SHASTA, AND NOBODY KNOWS WHERE THE THIRD IS. MAYBE IT'S OUT HERE.
THAT'S A GREAT THEORY THERE, SUPERFREAK.
BITE ME.
SO, TO REVIEW, WE'RE TELLING HENRY THAT EITHER THE CAR JUST DISASSEMBLED ITSELF--
--OR A CITY OF HOPI LIZARD PEOPLE DID IT.
SURE. WHY NOT?
AIN'T ANY MORE STUPID THAN A GIANT THUNDER LIZARD.
WE CAN CANVASS THE SCENE ALL DAY, BUT I GUARANTEE YOU THAT, AT THE END OF IT, THOSE'LL STILL BE THE TWO BEST THEORIES WE BRING TO HENRY...

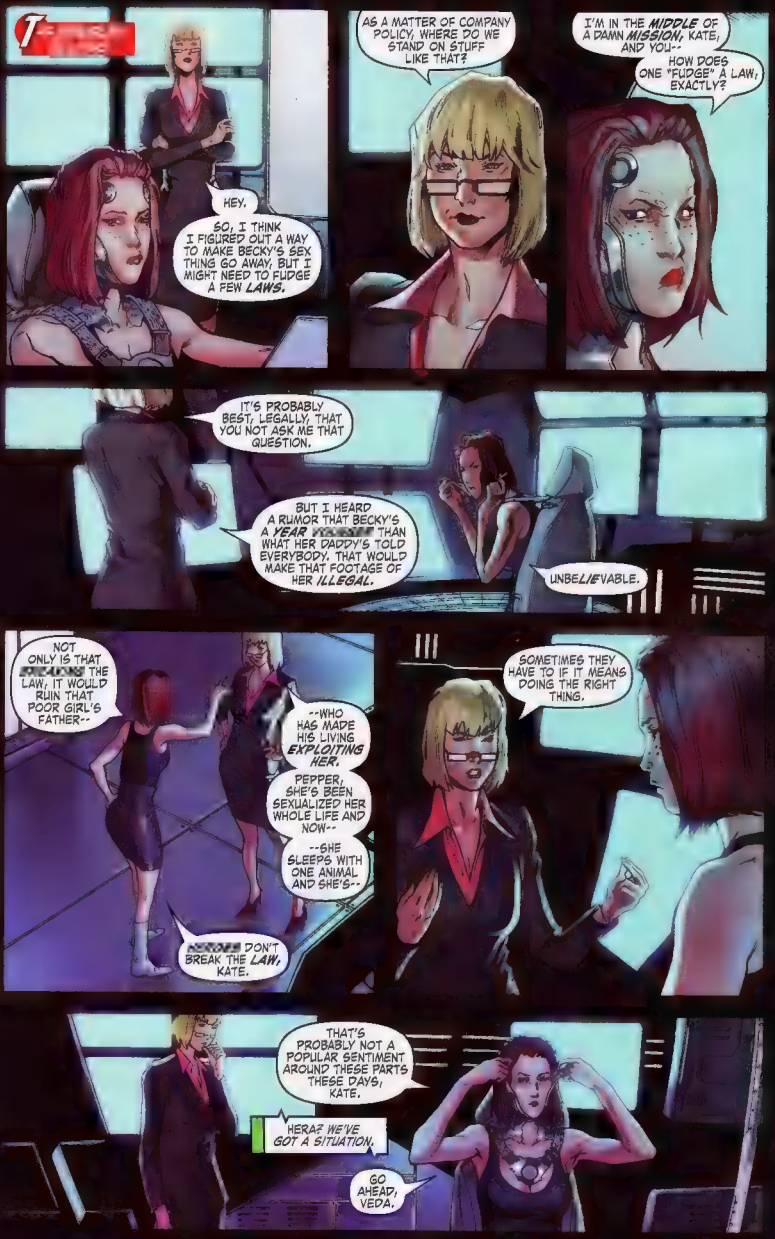
HOLLYWOOD HILLS:
THE DEMETER
THIS PLACE IS GREAT.
ISN'T IT JUST?
NO CELL RECEPTION UP HERE, TONY.
WHO'S YOUR PROVID--
COME ON, I'LL BUILD YOU A CELL TOWER, HENRY.
LOOK AT THIS PLACE! IT'S PERFECT.
WELL, OKAY, ONE, IT'S UP IN THE DAMN HILLS, TWO, THE CELL THING BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, NOBODY'LL EVER NEED CELL PHONES, THREE, IT'S NEAR PRIVATE RESIDENCES, FOUR--
GOD, SHUT UP.
DOESN'T IT JUST FEEL RIGHT?
THE BRADBURY FEELS RIGHT. BEING DOWNTOWN, [redacted] IN THE HEART OF THE CITY, THAT'S WHAT FEELS RIGHT.
IT'S L.A. THERE IS NO HEART.
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A SPACE DOWNTO--
WE CAN'T HOUSE THE ORDER IN THE BRADBURY ANYMORE. IT'S A HISTORICAL LANDMARK AND THE CITY'S KICKING US OUT.
SO C'MON. FALL IN LOVE WITH THIS BUILDING WITH ME.

THE DEMETER WAS FIRST BUILT AS AN AIR FORCE BARRACKS COMPLEX FOR OFFICERS THAT WERE DOING EAVESDROPPING WORK FOR THE CIA.
IT WOULD'VE BEEN THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES THEN, BUT GO AHEAD.
ANYWAY, AFTER THE WAR, IT WAS SOLD TO THE CITY, WHO SOLD IT TO THE STUDIOS.
THEY TURNED IT INTO BUNGALOWS FOR THEIR EAST COAST-BASED STARS WHEN THEY CAME OUT HERE TO MAKE MOVIES.
THEN IN THE EARLY SIXTIES, IT WAS CONVERTED INTO A LUXURY HOTEL.
THE DEMETER
MMM. LUXURY SMELLS LIKE DUST MITES.
IT'S YOUR MONEY.
SHUT UP.
YOU KNOW WHAT? HE'S RIGHT. IT IS MY MONEY. TELL YOU WHAT-- I'LL TAKE IT.
WOW--YOU-- WOW, REALLY? JUST LIKE THAT? I HAVEN'T EVEN TOLD YOU THE PRICE--
I'LL JUST SIGN THE CHECK.
YOU MAKE IT OUT FOR WHATEVER YOU WANT, OKAY?

BOYLE HEIGHTS:
SO YOU SNUCK INTO PEPPER'S WOMB-ROOM--
I SCRAMBLED A CO-WORKER'S TERMINAL.
--AND YOU CYBERSTALKED THE DRUNK DRIVER THAT ENDED YOUR ATHLETIC CAREER--
I RECONNECTED WITH AN OLD FRIEND.
--AND THEN YOU...PLAYED CATCH.
AND SOME Wii.
I HAVE TO CONFESS, CALAMITY, WE'RE ALL A LITTLE AMAZED YOU'RE STILL ON THE TEAM.
WHY? I DIDN'T BREAK ANY LAWS, I HAD THE DAY OFF.
I JUST WANTED TO MEET THE GUY, SHOW HIM WHAT HE TOOK AWAY FROM ME.
BUT WHEN I GOT THERE--DUDE WAS JUST WRECKED.
HIS WHOLE LIFE SINCE THEN--THE GUILT THAT GUY FEELS--IT'S WORSE THAN ANYTHING I COULD'VE DONE TO HIM, VEDA.
WELL, WE WERE ALL TERRIBLY IMPRESSED YOU DIDN'T BRAIN THE POOR BASTARD!!
NAH. HE'S A GOOD EGG. A SAD EGG, BUT A GOOD EGG.
I RECOMMENDED HIM FOR THE PROGRAM, ACTUALLY.
HERA, CARLOS IS FIFTEEN MINUTES LATE FOR OUR MEETING.
THERMAL SATELLITE RECON ISN'T SHOWING ANYTHING INSIDE, BUT THAT'S EASY TO FAKE OUT.
GO TAKE A PEEK.
I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK.
CARLOS ARAÚJO CARVALHO, A.K.A. CORONA. SOLAR-POWERED CONDUIT AND--
--AND I KNOW HE WAS A TEAMMATE, CALAMITY, BUT HE NEEDS TO BE TREATED LIKE A MURDER SUSPECT RIGHT NOW.
ROGER THAT, HERA.

ALTHOUGH I DID TRAIN WITH THE GUY FOR LIKE A YEAR AND HE'S A GREAT GUY AND THERE'S NO WAY HE KILLED ANYBOD--
HNN.
SPEEDLING'S COMING.
DIESEL, GRAB IT.
GOT IT, CUT.
12
YAAAWWRRG--
CARLOS-- WHAT THE HELL, MAN?
RUH.
RUH!

AH, CRAP.
BOSS?
TOSS HIM.
JAMES!
DARLING, WHAT HAPPENED--
THEY--THEY HAPPENED!
BLACK DAHLIAS.
ATTACK.
and Veil
of The Order
THE ORDER? THEN KILL 'EM ALL.
PEPPER? WE'VE GOT A SITUATION.
JAMES--GET READY.
BUT I CAN BARELY GET UP...

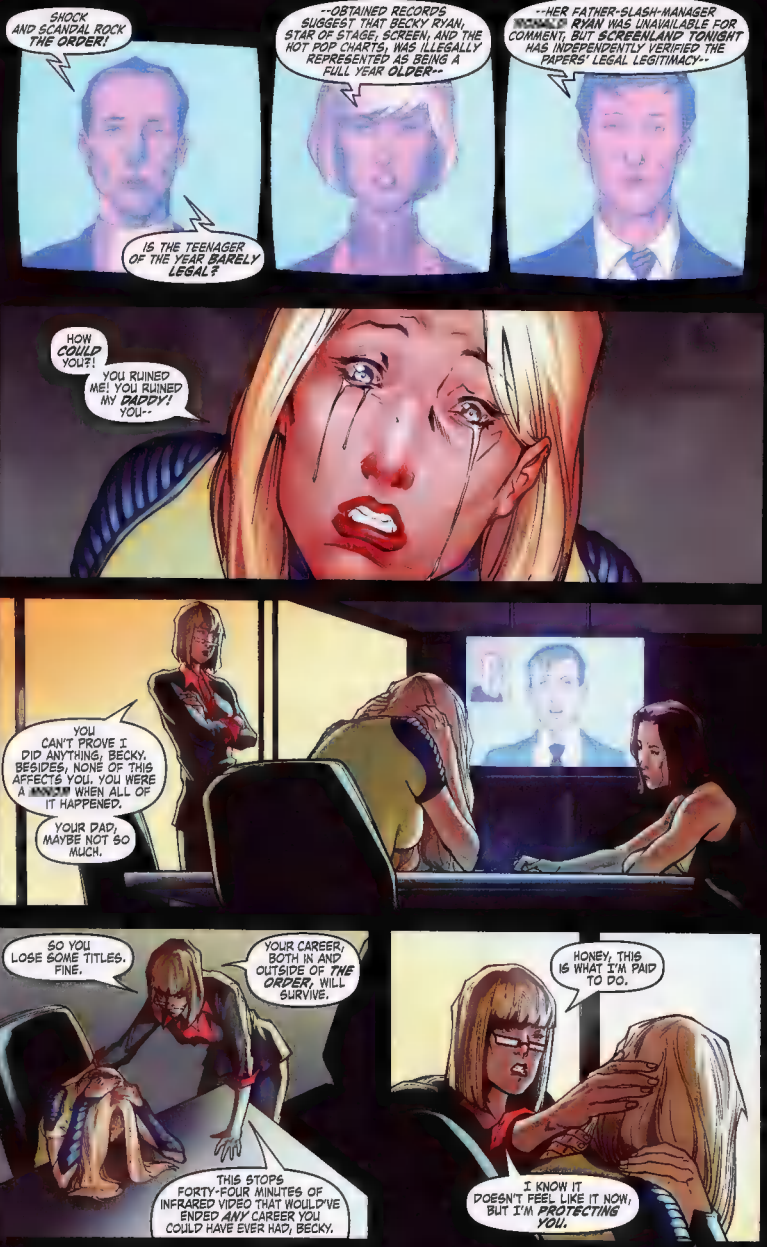

HEY.
SO, I THINK I FIGURED OUT A WAY TO MAKE BECKY'S SEX THING GO AWAY, BUT I MIGHT NEED TO FUDGE A FEW LAWS.
AS A MATTER OF COMPANY POLICY, WHERE DO WE STAND ON STUFF LIKE THAT?
I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A DAMN MISSION, KATE, AND YOU--
HOW DOES ONE "FUDGE" A LAW, EXACTLY?
IT'S PROBABLY BEST, LEGALLY, THAT YOU NOT ASK ME THAT QUESTION.
BUT I HEARD A RUMOR THAT BECKY'S A YEAR YOUNGER THAN WHAT HER DADDY'S TOLD EVERYBODY. THAT WOULD MAKE THAT FOOTAGE OF HER ILLEGAL.
UNBELIEVABLE.
NOT ONLY IS THAT BREAKING THE LAW, IT WOULD RUIN THAT POOR GIRL'S FATHER--
--WHO HAS MADE HIS LIVING EXPLOITING HER.
PEPPER, SHE'S BEEN SEXUALIZED HER WHOLE LIFE AND NOW--
--SHE SLEEPS WITH ONE ANIMAL AND SHE'S--
DON'T BREAK THE LAW, KATE.
SOMETIMES THEY HAVE TO IF IT MEANS DOING THE RIGHT THING.
THAT'S PROBABLY NOT A POPULAR SENTIMENT AROUND THESE PARTS THESE DAYS, KATE.
HERA? WE'VE GOT A SITUATION.
GO AHEAD, VEDA.

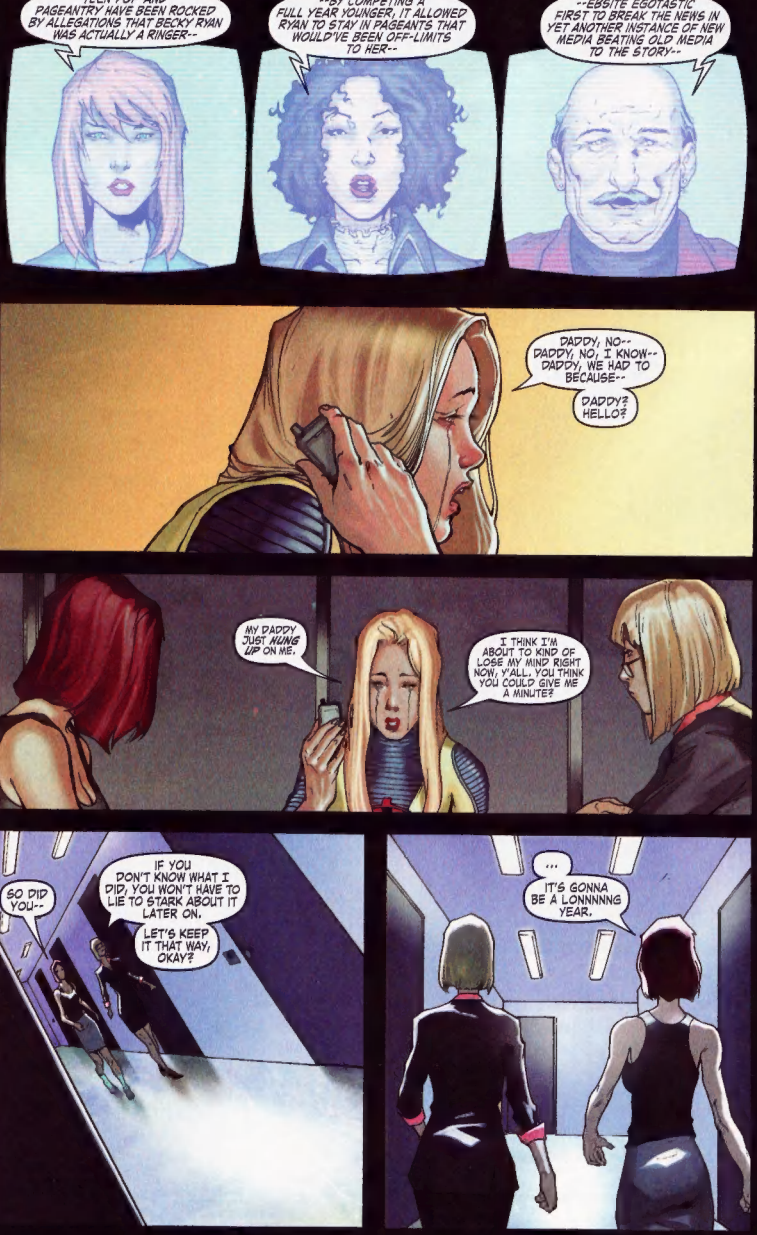
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK HERE, HERA.
RISE, BABIES, RISE.
AH-AH-- NOBODY TOUCHES THE MOVIE STAR, HOT TOPIC.
STUPID LITTLE MAN.
CCCCCAAAAAAA
!!!!!!!!!
AAATCH ME IF YOU CAN.
III'LL TEAR YOUR HEAD OFF WITH MY HANDS.
OR BETTER YET--
I'LL LET MY KINETOKINESIS SHRED YOU....

AAARRGH!
CALAMITY!
DON'T WORRY, SWEETHEART.
I PROMISE TO END HIS SUFFERING RIGHT DAMN QUICK...
BLT
ZOOT ZOOT ZOOT... ZOOT

YOU RANG?
KFWANG
BRA-KOOM
WHAT'S THE SITUATION?
APPARENTLY TIM BURTON SPONSORS A WOMEN'S GOLF TEAM.
WHAT?
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
omega class battlesuit detected
MULHOLLAND-- STOP 'EM.

GRRAAAAAHHHH--
attack
YEAH, SWORD, I KNOW...
HIYA, HOLLY.
HOLY CRAP!
DRANG. GET US OUT OF HERE.
SEE YOU 'ROUND, MULHOLLAND BLACK.
DON'T YOU DARE--
MOVE.
CRAP.
FFFWWWOOOF


SHOCK AND SCANDAL ROCK THE ORDER!
IS THE TEENAGER OF THE YEAR BARELY LEGAL?
--OBTAINED RECORDS SUGGEST THAT BECKY RYAN, STAR OF STAGE, SCREEN, AND THE HOT POP CHARTS, WAS ILLEGALLY REPRESENTED AS BEING A FULL YEAR OLDER--
--HER FATHER-SLASH-MANAGER [redacted] RYAN WAS UNAVAILABLE FOR COMMENT, BUT SCREENLAND TONIGHT HAS INDEPENDENTLY VERIFIED THE PAPERS' LEGAL LEGITIMACY--
HOW COULD YOU?!
YOU RUINED ME! YOU RUINED MY DADDY! YOU--
YOU CAN'T PROVE I DID ANYTHING, BECKY. BESIDES, NONE OF THIS AFFECTS YOU. YOU WERE A [redacted] WHEN ALL OF IT HAPPENED.
YOUR DAD, MAYBE NOT SO MUCH.
SO YOU LOSE SOME TITLES. FINE.
YOUR CAREER, BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE OF THE ORDER, WILL SURVIVE.
THIS STOPS FORTY-FOUR MINUTES OF INFRARED VIDEO THAT WOULD'VE ENDED ANY CAREER YOU COULD HAVE EVER HAD, BECKY.
HONEY, THIS IS WHAT I'M PAID TO DO.
I KNOW IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE IT NOW, BUT I'M PROTECTING YOU.


TEEN POP AND PAGEANTRY HAVE BEEN ROCKED BY ALLEGATIONS THAT BECKY RYAN WAS ACTUALLY A RINGER--
--BY COMPETING A FULL YEAR YOUNGER, IT ALLOWED RYAN TO STAY IN PAGEANTS THAT WOULD'VE BEEN OFF-LIMITS TO HER--
--EBSITE EGOTASTIC FIRST TO BREAK THE NEWS IN YET ANOTHER INSTANCE OF NEW MEDIA BEATING OLD MEDIA TO THE STORY--
DADDY, NO-- DADDY, NO, I KNOW-- DADDY, WE HAD TO BECAUSE--
DADDY? HELLO?
MY DADDY JUST HUNG UP ON ME.
I THINK I'M ABOUT TO KIND OF LOSE MY MIND RIGHT NOW, Y'ALL. YOU THINK YOU COULD GIVE ME A MINUTE?
SO DID YOU--
IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID, YOU WON'T HAVE TO LIE TO STARK ABOUT IT LATER ON.
LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY, OKAY?
...
IT'S GONNA BE A LONNNNNG YEAR.

DAMMIT, HOLLY--NOT AGAIN!
NO-- GUYS-- WAIT.
NO, HOLLY, YOU WAIT. WE WERE ALL WILLING TO WAIT FOR YOU TO GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER BUT--CAREFUL, JAMES--
DAMMIT, WHY DON'T I HAVE KINETOKINESIS?
BUT YOU KEEP LETTING US DOWN--
--AND PEOPLE KEEP GETTING HURT...
GOT HIM.
WHILE WE, KEEP, WAITING, FOR YOU!
MAGGIE-- IT'S NOT--
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT--
DON'T WALK AWAY FROM ME-- LOOK!

I KNOW THESE GUYS.
I KNOW WHAT THEY'RE UP TO BECAUSE I USED TO BE ONE.
YOU'VE HEARD "THE MEDIA IS THE MESSAGE"? IT'S NOT REALLY TRUE ANYMORE.
MESSAGE IS MEDIA.
INTERNET, YOUTUBE, BLOGS, VLOGS, CAMPHONES--THIS IS REALLY THE DAWN OF HUMAN HISTORY, RIGHT?
THIS IS THE MOMENT WHEN WE START RECORDING ALL OF OUR MOMENTS.
ASYMMETRICAL MEDIA. VIRAL, UNMARKETABLE AND UNSTOPPABLE.
OUR HISTORIES ARE BROADCAST INSTANTLY AND REMEMBERED INFINITELY. EVERYTHING WE DO CAN NOW HAUNT US ALL THE REST OF OUR LIVES.
AND IT'S MY JOB TO MANAGE THAT HISTORY--TO MANAGE THAT MESSAGE--ANY WAY I CAN.
SO DO I HAVE THE JOB, OR WHAT?
TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT ISSUE